

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 312435 TOSEC 340083

NODIS
FOR SECRETARY FROM DAY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, EG, IS, LY, SU, US

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: RESPONSE TO FAHMY (S/S
NO. 7626241)

REF: (A) TOSEC 340027 (B) TOSEC 340011 (C) TOSEC 340012
(D) SECTO 34009; (E) TOSEC 340313

1. PROBLEM

HERMANN EILTS HAS REPORTED CONVERSATIONS ON SEVERAL
SUBJECTS WITH FAHMY. ON TWO SUBJECTS -- LIBYA AND AID
LEVELS FOR ISRAEL -- FAHMY HAS COMPLAINED TO YOU ON THE
BASIS OF INACCURATE OR EXAGGERATED REPORTS. HE ALSO
RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR POLICY IN THE SUDAN, BUT SAID
HE HIMSELF DOUBTED THE REPORTS HE HAD RECEIVED. THIS MEMO-
RANDUM PROPOSES FOR YOUR APPROVAL A RESPONSE TO FAHMY ON ALL
SECRET

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THREE SUBJECTS. --

2. DISCUSSION:

--LIBYA: FAHMY STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY THE EGYPTIAN
AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI THAT UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH
LIBYA WERE IN FACT CLOSER THAN WE HAD LED THE GOE TO
BELIEVE. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS FAHMY CITED A REPORT THAT

WE HAVE AGREED TO BUILD A QUOTE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK UNQUOTE FOR QADHAFI'S USE. HERMANN EFFECTIVELY REBUTTED FAHMY'S CONTENTIONS BUT FAHMY REQUESTED OUR ASSESSMENT OF LIBYAN INTERNAL SITUATION AS WELL AS STATEMENT OF CURRENT U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY TOWARD LIBYA.

--EGYPTIAN CONCERNS ABOUT U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS ARE RELATIVELY EASY TO ADDRESS. OUR POLICY HAS BEEN FROZEN SINCE MAY 1975, WHEN WE DEFERRED TO SADAT'S STRONG FEELINGS AGAINST ACCEPTING A LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON. AS HERMANN POINTED OUT TO FAHMY, THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IS ILL-INFORMED AND APPEARS TO BE PASSING ON IDLE GOSSIP FROM WITHIN THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THE REPORT ABOUT USG APPROVAL OF A COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK FOR LARG MAY HAVE BEEN STIMULATED BY A 1974 REQUEST BY NORTHROP-PAGE FOR AN EXPORT LICENSE FOR SALE OF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. THAT REQUEST WAS REFUSED BUT RECENTLY THE REQUEST WAS RENEWED AND SUBSEQUENTLY TURNED DOWN AGAIN. THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION TO HERMANN, FOR YOUR APPROVAL, REINFORCES HERMANN'S DENIAL OF ANY CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY TOWARDS LIBYA AND PROVIDES OUR ASSESSMENT OF LIBYAN INTERNAL SITUATION.

--AID LEVELS: FAHMY ALLUDED TO A STATEMENT YOU ALLEGEDLY MADE THAT YOU WERE ASKING PRESIDENT FORD TO GIVE ISRAEL THE FULL AMOUNT OF ECONOMIC AID ISRAEL IS REQUESTING. FAHMY ARGUED THAT THIS STATEMENT WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT IN SECRET

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THE ARAB WORLD. HE SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PURPOSES AND ASKED THAT HIS CONCERN BE REPORTED TO YOU. IN COMMENTING ON THE CONVERSATION, HERMANN NOTED THAT THE REDUCTION OF THE EGYPTIAN AID LEVEL FROM THE FISCAL '77 LEVEL WOULD DOUBTLESS BECOME KNOWN IN EGYPT BEFORE LONG SINCE IT HAD APPEARED IN THE ISRAELI PRESS.

--WE HAVE NOT YET INFORMED GOVERNMENTS ABOUT AID LEVELS FOR FY-78, PENDING THE BUDGET SUBMISSION TO THE HILL, T'OUGH IT IS TRUE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN LEAKING OUT THROUGH THE ISRAELIS. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANC'S, IT SEEMS TO US PRUDENT TO PREPARE FAHMY FOR A SOMEWHAT LOWER FIGURE WHILE STILL NOT GOING INTO PRECISE AMOUNTS. THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION FOR HERMANN EILTS, FOR YOUR APPROVAL, ATTEMPTS TO DO THIS.

--SUDAN: FAHMY HAS AGAIN MENTIONED HIS BELIEF THAT WE ARE SUPPORTING--AS HE BELIEVES WE ALWAYS HAVE--SUDANESE EXILE LEADER SADIQ AL-MAHDI AND HIS ANSAR FOLLOWERS. HE SAID EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE HAD REPORTED THAT THREE CIA EMPLOYEES INCLUDING A MR. COGAN, HAD RECENTLY ATTENDED A MEETING IN LIVERPOOL AT WHICH SADIQ AL-MAHDI HAD DISCUSSED PLANS TO

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OVERTHROW NIMEIRI WITH THEM AND SEVERAL LIBYAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS. AS HE DID ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, HERMANN TOLD FAHMY THAT WE HAVE NOT BEEN TRADITIONAL SUPPORTERS OF THE ANSAR, AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE SINCERITY OF OUR PRESENT COMMITMENT TO PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S GOVERNMENT. HERMANN ADDED THAT HE SERIOUSLY DOUBTED THE PRESENCE OF AMERICAN OFFICIALS AT THE ALLEGED MEETING IN LIVERPOOL.

GIVEN FAHMY'S PERSISTENT BELIEF IN OUR COMPLICITY WITH SADIQ AL-MAHDI; I AGREE WITH HERMANN'S SUGGESTION THAT WE STATE TO FAHMY IN UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS WHAT OFFICIAL U.S. POLICY TOWARD NIMEIRI IS. THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION, FOR SECRET

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YOUR APPROVAL, WOULD DO THAT.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

SECRET/NODIS TELEGRAM
TO: CAIRO IMMEDIATE
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, EG
SUBJECT: IN RESPONSE TO FAHMY

REFS: (A) CAIRO 17788; (B) CAIRO 17748; (C) CAIRO 17746;
(D) CAIRO 17750

1. EXASPERATING THOUGH FAHMY'S CARPING IS GETTING TO BE, WE SHOULD PROVIDE HIM WITH SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSES WHERE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES APPEAR TO BE INVOLVED. HE HAS RECENTLY RAISED THE SUBJECTS OF LIBYA, SUDAN, AND ISRAELI AID LEVELS WITH YOU, AND ON ALL THREE THERE ARE SUBSTANTIVE POINTS THAT CAN BE MADE. ON AID LEVELS, I AGREE IT IS LIKELY THE EGYPTIANS WILL SHORTLY BECOME AWARE OF THE REDUCTION FROM LAST YEAR'S FIGURE, AND WE SHOULD PREPARE FAHMY FOR THIS. PLEASE CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ME TO FAHMY:

2. I APPRECIATE FAHMY'S CANDID RESPONSE TO THE POINTS THAT YOU CONVEYED FROM ME ON DECEMBER 27 (CAIRO 17788). FRANKNESS HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

3. IN THE SAME SPIRIT, I WANT TO SAY THAT I AM ALWAYS DISAPPOINTED WHEN FAHMY ACCEPTS CONTENTIOUS REPORTS AS HAVING SUBSTANCE AND, RATHER THAN SIMPLY INQUIRING, BURDENS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FURTHER CHARGES AND COMPLAINTS. THE STORIES ABOUT OUR BUILDING A COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK IN LIBYA AND ABOUT MY ALLEGED STATEMENTS ON ISRAELI AID LEVELS

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ARE CASES IN POINT. NEVERTHELESS, THE SUBJECTS THEMSELVES ARE IMPORTANT ONES, AND WE SHOULD DO ALL WE CAN TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING ON THEM.

4. LIBYA--

AS YOU HAVE POINTED OUT, U.S. POLICY TOWARD LIBYA HAS NOT CHANGED. OUR RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED. WE CONTINUE TO REFUSE EXPORT LICENSES FOR SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ITEMS SUCH AS THE EIGHT C-130'S BOUGHT AND PAID FOR BY LIBYA AND A REQUEST FOR AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM EVEN THOUGH LIBYA CONTINUES TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THESE ITEMS. WE DID NOT AGREE TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A LIBYAN AMBASSADOR IN DEFERENCE TO SADAT'S CONCERN AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THIS POSITION. DESPITE REPEATED ATTEMPTS BY THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT TO ENGAGE US IN HIGH-LEVEL TALKS IN WASHINGTON AIMED AT AN IMPROVEMENT IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, WE HAVE DECLINED TO DO SO. IN ANY EVENT, WE WOULD NOT TAKE ANY STEPS WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING WITH EGYPT.

WHILE WE ARE GLAD TO GIVE FAHMY OUR ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL SITUATION IN LIBYA, WE BELIEVE THAT EGYPT IS IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO MONITOR CURRENT EVENTS IN LIBYA AND TO INTERPRET THEIR MEANING AND IMPORTANCE. WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON THE STRENGTH OF THE CURRENT LIBYAN REGIME AND THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF OPPOSITION TO QADHAFI AS WELL AS FAHMY'S COMMENTS SPECIFICALLY ON THE FOLLOWING:

--POLITICALLY, EVENTS OF THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF HAVE MADE VISIBLE THE HOLLOWNESS OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC) AS AN EXECUTIVE BODY. SINCE AUGUST 1975, MOST RCC MEMBERS HAVE EITHER FLED THE COUNTRY OR ARE UNDER HOUSE ARREST, LEAVING ONLY FIVE--INCLUDING QADHAFI HIMSELF--STILL ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE GOVERNMENT. IT APPEARS THAT QADHAFI CAN COUNT ON UNQUESTIONING LOYALTY
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FROM ONLY TWO OF THESE, PRIME MINISTER JALLUD AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF YUNIS. THE OTHER TWO, CHIEF OF STAFF KHARUBI AND INTERIOR MINISTER HUMAYDI, HAVE HAD SERIOUS DIFFERENCES WITH QADHAFI OVER THE PAST YEAR. DESPITE THESE AND OTHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN QADHAFI AND HIS FOUR COLLEAGUES, IT WOULD NOT APPEAR THAT QADHAFI IS THREATENED BY RIVALS WITHIN THE RCC OR IN THE CABINET. WE HAVE SEEN NOTHING TO INDICATE THAT THOSE RCC MEMBERS WHO ARE IN EXILE OR UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN LIBYA HAVE SUBSTANTIAL FOLLOWING INSIDE LIBYA SUFFICIENT TO POSE THREAT TO QADHAFI.

--WE LACK PRECISE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOYALTY OF THE ARMY. DISILLUSIONMENT AMONG HIGHER RANKING OFFICERS HAS

GROWN SINCE THE TROUBLES OF AUGUST 1975. QADHAFI NO LONGER TRUSTS HIS OFFICER CORPS AND HAS MOVED YOUNGER KINSMEN AND CLANSMEN INTO STRATEGIC POSITIONS OF CONTROL. HE HAS SOUGHT A COUNTERVAILING FORCE BY APPEALING TO AND ARMING SELECT DESERT TRIBESMEN, HAS DEVELOPED THE POLICE INTO A PARAMILITARY FORCE, AND REPORTEDLY MOVED MAJOR AMMUNITION STORES FROM VARIOUS BASES IN BENGHAZI AND TRIPOLI DISTRICTS TO HIS HOME TOWN OF SIRTE. NEVERTHELESS QADHAFI APPEARS TO HAVE STRONG SUPPORT AMONG ENLISTED MEN AND YOUNGER OFFICERS FROM SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES WHOSE FAMILIES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

--ANOTHER SOURCE OF OPPOSITION TO THE CURRENT REGIME IS FROM URBAN COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL MIDDLE CLASSES AND FORMER ELITES. QADHAFI'S REORGANIZATIONS OF LIBYA'S UNIVERSITIES AND PURGES OF QUOTE ANTI-REVOLUTIONARIES UNQUOTE HAS GENERATED INCREASED OPPOSITION FROM STUDENTS AND UNIVERSITY STAFF. THESE GROUPS, HOWEVER, SEEM TO BE RELATIVELY POWERLESS AND UNORGANIZED IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO QADHAFI'S RULE.

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--WE HAVE HEARD THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION AGAINST QADHAFI IN OCTOBER. THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS IN GOVERNMENT, COMMERCE, AND THE MILITARY WHO OPPOSE THE CURRENT REGIME BUT THEY DO NOT YET APPEAR TO CONSTITUTE AN ORGANIZED GROUP CAPABLE OF OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT. THERE IS REGIONAL AND LOCAL RIVALRY BUT IT DOES NOT SEEM TO THREATEN NATIONAL CONTROL. (THE LARGE CALL-UP OF YOUNG MEN WHICH BEGAN IN EARNEST IN OCTOBER 1976 HAS NOT IMPROVED LIBYA'S MILITARY CAPABILITY; THERE ARE TOO MANY TO BE EASILY ABSORBED AND THE GREATEST IMPACT HAS BEEN TO SLOW DOWN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY DUE TO MAN-POWER SHORTAGES IN GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS.) WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF ANY SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE OBTAINED BY QADHAFI DURING HIS RECENT MOSCOW TRIP.

--YOU SHOULD REEMPHASIZE TO FAHMY THAT WE AGREE WITH HIS ASSERTION THAT U.S. AND GOE HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS IN NOT DOING ANYTHING RELATIVE TO LIBYA THAT WOULD EMBARRASS SADAT OR STRENGTHEN QADHAFI. WITH RESPECT TO REPORTS FROM EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA TUHAMI, THESE HAVE PAINTED AN INCORRECT PICTURE OF U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS. WE KNOW OF NO AMERICAN SALE OF EQUIPMENT FOR EARLY WARNING STATION OR OTHER COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT FOR LIBYAN MILITARY. AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN, INCLUDING COMMUNICATION SALESMEN, HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY LARG FOR SALES OF ALL

KINDS. NORTHROP-PAGE WAS APPROACHED RECENTLY AND CAME TO

DEPARTMENT TO REACTIVATE A 1974 REQUEST FOR EXPORT LICENSE FOR AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS. OUR EARLIER REFUSAL TO SELL THIS EQUIPMENT TO LIBYA WAS RECONFIRMED.

--THIS OUGHT TO PUT TO REST FAHMY'S CONCERNS AROUSED BY TUHAM'S REPORT.

5. AID LEVELS--
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REPORTS SUCH AS THE ONE FAHMY ALLUDED TO, APPEARING IN THE ISRAELI PRESS, ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. THEY ARE ONLY A SMOKE SCREEN FOR THE ISRAELI ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A HIGHER LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AID FROM THE U.S.

SINCE FAHMY HAS RAISED THE QUESTION OF AID LEVELS, HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE POINT I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS TO HIM, AND THAT IS THAT WE TREAT THE TOTAL ASSISTANCE LEVELS TO THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST DISPUTE AS AN INTERRELATED PACKAGE, WITH THE AMOUNT PROVIDED TO THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES REMAINING ROUGHLY IN THE SAME PROPORTION ONE TO ANOTHER. AS FAHMY KNOWS, THIS WAS THE CASE IN FY 1976, 1977, AND THE TRANSITIONAL QUARTER. IT WILL BE THE CASE IN FY 1978. THIS REFLECTS THE RELATIONSHIP THAT OUR MIDDLE EAST AID HAS TO THE PEACE-MAKING PROCESS AND IT ALSO TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE REALITIES OF OUR CONGRESSIONAL PROCESS.

FAHMY MAKES REFERENCE TO OUR GIVING ISRAEL EVERYTHING IT WANTS. AS I AM SURE HE UNDERSTANDS, WE HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED GIVING ISRAEL THE FULL AMOUNT IT HAS REQUESTED EITHER IN 1977 OR IN 1978, WHEN THEY HAVE ASKED FOR U.S. DOLLARS 2.3 BILLION.

THE AID LEVELS THAT WILL EMERGE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES WILL OF COURSE BE THE PRODUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL AS DOMESTIC BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS WITHIN THE U.S., BUT I CAN ASSURE FAHMY THAT: FIRST, THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT GET ALL THAT THEY WANT; SECOND, EGYPT WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE A VERY MAJOR PROGRAM--AS BEFORE, ONE OF THE LARGEST WE HAVE EVER PROVIDED TO A SINGLE COUNTRY; AND, THIRD, AID TO ISRAEL WILL CONTINUE TO BE LOOKED AT IN RELATION TO THE AID WE ARE PROVIDING TO THE ARAB COUNTRIES, SINCE WE UNDERSTAND THE RELEVANCE OF THESE PROGRAMS TO THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORT.

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6. SUDAN--

TELL FAHMY THAT I HAVE INSTRUCTED YOU TO SAY AGAIN, AS WE
DID LAST SUMMER, THAT IT IS OFFICIAL U.S. POLICY TO

SUPPORT THE LEGAL GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN HEADED BY PRESIDENT
NIMEIRI. REMIND FAHMY THAT, SINCE NIMEIRI'S HIGHLY
SUCCESSFUL PRIVATE TRIP TO THE U.S. LAST JUNE, DURING
WHICH HE MET WITH PRESIDENT FORD, WE HAVE TAKEN A SERIES
OF STEPS WHICH INDICATE OUR FAITH IN NIMEIRI'S FOREIGN
AND DOMESTIC POLICIES. THESE INCLUDE DECISIONS TO RESUME
OUR AID PROGRAM IN SUDAN AND TO MAKE SUDAN ELIGIBLE FOR
THE PURCHASE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. IN LIGHT OF THIS
IT WOULD BE MAD TO SAY WE ARE WORKING AGAINST
NIMEIRI.

YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOCK DOWN THE STORY OF CIA OFFICIALS
ATTENDING A RECENT MEETING IN LIVERPOOL WHERE SUDANESE
DISSIDENTS AND LIBYANS DISCUSSED PLANS TO OVERTHROW
PRESIDENT NIMEIRI. WE CAN ASSURE FAHMY THAT THE REPORT
OF ANY AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH A MEETING IS FALSE.
YOU MAY EXPLAIN THAT THERE IS INDEED AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT
NAMED COGAN, WHO MOREOVER SERVED IN KHARTOUM SOME YEARS
AGO WHEN HE BECAME FRIENDLY WITH THEN-PRIME MINISTER
SADIQ AL-MAHDI. COGAN, HOWEVER, HAS NOT BEEN NEAR ENGLAND
FOR SOME TIME. SINCE COGAN'S FRIENDSHIP WITH AL-MAHDI WAS
PUBLICLY WELL-KNOWN, THE FABRICATORS OF THE LIVERPOOL
REPORT MAY WELL HAVE USED COGAN'S NAME TO LEND
VERISIMILITUDE TO THEIR STORY. END TEXT.

4. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING
TELEGRAM TO CAIRO.
APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

5. DRAFTED:NEA:ARDA:Mking:AF:RFILLING
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APPROVED:NEA:ARDA
CLEARED:S:HCOLLUMS

ROBINSON

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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